

Guidance and Advice
R25E
Cancer Education Grant Program
National Cancer Institute

I. IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The Guidance and Advice provided below are derived from the National Cancer Institute (NCI) Program Announcement in the NIH Guide. Complete information about this announcement can be accessed directly at the following two website addresses:

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-03-093.html> and

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-CA-00-012.html>.

After consulting the official announcement, the information and clarifications provided below together with the Form PHS 398 application kit should be all that you need to prepare an R25E grant application.

II. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

The Cancer Education Grant (**R25E**) Program (CEGP) of the National Cancer Institute (NCI) is a flexible, curriculum-driven program aimed at developing and sustaining innovative educational approaches that ultimately will have an impact on reducing cancer incidence, mortality, and morbidity, as well as on improving the quality of life of cancer patients. The CEGP will accept investigator-initiated grant applications that pursue a wide spectrum of objectives ranging from short courses; to the development of new curriculum in academic institutions; to national forums and seminar series; to hands-on workshop experiences for the continuing education of health care professionals, biomedical researchers, and the lay community; to structured short-term research experiences designed to motivate high school, college, medical, dental, and other health professional students to pursue careers in cancer research. Education grants can focus on education activities before, during, and after the completion of a doctoral level degree (e.g. Ph.D., M.D., D.P.H., D.D.S., D.N.S.) as long as they address a need that is not fulfilled adequately by any other grant mechanism available at the National Institutes of Health and are dedicated to areas of particular concern to the National Cancer Program. The CEGP encourages innovative uses of the **R25E** grant to explore new educational approaches that will help promote progress in preventing and curing cancer.

General Content of the Program:

The CEGP accomplishes its objectives by providing institutions a wide range of opportunities to develop and sustain distinctive curriculum-driven programs that focus on various educational activities. The target audiences for these programs can range from: biomedical researchers; health professionals; medical, dental, nursing, and other health professional students; college and high school students; to members of the lay community. Some examples of CEGP type projects include the following:

- **Introductory Research Experiences for Students:** These kinds of programs would ideally provide opportunities for investigators with ongoing cancer research projects to attract medical, dental, nursing, public health and other students in the health professions (e.g. social workers, nutritionists) to cancer research environments for short periods of time. Introductory research experiences should not exceed **six months**; education grants are not training instruments. These programs should include plans and activities aimed at recruiting under-represented minority students into cancer research.
- **The Design, Implementation, and Evaluation of New Curricula of Special Significance to Cancer:** The role of nutrition in the prevention of cancer, for example, is a curriculum being

developed at several academic institutions supported by CEGPs. Other institutions have used CEGPs to create a risk counseling curriculum for nurses or an Objective Structured Clinical Exam (OSCE) for medical students. These types of efforts allow institutions and their faculty to design and implement new curricula of critical importance to the education of health professionals and cancer researchers. It is expected that the grantee institution will assume support of the new curriculum after the grant period ends.

- **Cancer Pain Management and Palliative Care Education Programs:** These types of programs permit institutions to develop a curriculum for health care professionals in areas that have been overlooked and undervalued in the education process with the stipulation that the grantee institution would assume responsibility for sustaining the program after the grant ends.
- **Outreach Programs to the Lay Community:** Many NCI-supported Cancer Centers have developed outreach programs that help the lay public develop an infrastructure for educating its community about cancer prevention and early detection, for establishing sensitivity groups for families of cancer patients and the survivors of cancer, for hospice care etc.
- **Workshops, National Forums, Short Courses and/or Hands-on Experiences:** These programs can range from one day to several weeks. Some examples of topical areas on which these programs might focus include: oncology education programs, minority health initiatives, education in particular state-of-the-art basic research techniques and methodology and or technology, introductory courses plus hands on experiences in molecular pathology etc. etc. These are the types of curricula that can be offered effectively on an annual or biannual basis to individuals either regionally or nationwide depending on needs and resources.

The above examples suggest the flexibility of the **R25E** education grant to accomplish both short-term and long-term objectives. In some cases, these awards have short-term objectives to help develop, through scholarly efforts, new education approaches which the institution will standardize and assume responsibility for in the future (e.g., education programs in pain management and palliative care, development of nutrition curriculum in academic institutions). In other cases, these grants stabilized and strengthen activities that are more suitable for long-term support (e.g., Short-term research experiences to motivate medical, nursing, public health and other health professionals to pursue cancer research careers).

III. ELIGIBILITY:

Any not-for-profit or for-profit organization engaged in health-related education, research, or training and located in the United States, its possessions, or territories may apply for a CEGP. If any foreign institution wishes to apply, it must first receive a formal waiver of the above requirement in writing from the National Cancer Institute.

IV. MECHANISM OF SUPPORT:

Education grants use the **R25E** grant mechanism, which is not considered to be typical research instrument, but it does involve experiments in education that require a plan for evaluating the degree of success or failure. All applicants may request up to five years of support in a single grant period in order to develop or maintain a specific education program. Short-term studies limited to five years or less with no plans for renewal are encouraged. Long-term programs, however, may receive continued support in additional increments of five years or less. In every case, the renewable nature of the grant and its maximum duration will be determined by peer reviewers.

V. ALLOWABLE COSTS:

Applications may not exceed \$300,000 in direct costs for any single year unless there is explicit written permission of the NCI. In general, allowable costs must be consistent with PHS policy and recommended by peer reviewers. These costs include but are not limited to the following: supplies, personnel costs, student compensation (when appropriate), consultant costs, equipment, travel, sub-contractual costs, other expenses and other student costs (when appropriate). Faculty members participating in the design and implementation of education programs can request with proper justification the percent of their time devoted to curriculum design and specialized organizational, coordinating, and implementation activities which are essential to achieving the goals of their proposed education program.

Indirect costs are payable at the rate of 8 percent of total modified direct costs. The 8 percent indirect cost rate will apply to **all sub-contracts** on any R25E award. R25Es are not training grants. This means that traditional mentor-student type activities are **not allowable** costs.

For appropriate advice and specific instruction regarding the above and other budgetary and administrative policies that you must follow in managing this award, please refer to section **XI. INQUIRIES**.

VI. SPECIAL PROVISIONS AND REQUIREMENTS:

This mechanism is entirely flexible within the general boundaries of different education concepts. There are no special provisions of the NCI but there is one requirement: The NCI requires a special section titled "**Evaluation Plan**" that clearly denotes how the proposed education program will be evaluated for success or failure based on its purpose and objectives.

VI. APPLICATION PROCEDURE:

SUBMISSION, REVIEW, AND AWARD OF COMPETING APPLICATIONS

A. Application Receipt, Review and Award Dates:

The receipt dates for all NEW **R25E** education grant applications are February 1, June 1 and October 1 and for all COMPETING RENEWAL, SUPPLEMENTAL AND AMENDED R25E applications are March 1, July 1, and November 1. Initial review is usually completed in June, October and February, respectively. Review by the National Cancer Advisory Board is usually completed in October, January and May, respectively. The earliest possible award dates are in December, April and July.

B. Where to Send the Application:

The **original** and **three copies** of the application must be submitted to the Center for Scientific Review (CSR), NIH to the following address:

Center for Scientific Review
National Institutes of Health
6701 Rockledge Drive, Room 1040-MSC 7710
Bethesda, Maryland 20892-7710
Bethesda, Maryland 20817 (for express/courier service)

To expedite the review process, which will be conducted by the NCI, two additional copies should be sent to:

Referral Officer
Division of Extramural Activities
National Cancer Institute
6116 Executive Boulevard, Room 8062
MSC/8329
Bethesda, MD 20892-8329

Rockville, MD 20852 (express/courier service)

C. Format for Submitting the Application:

Applications should be submitted using the instructions provided in the Form PHS 398 application kit. These application kits are available on the following NIH website: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html>. Forms are also available at most institutional offices of sponsored research or from the Division of Extramural Outreach and Information Resources, National Institutes of Health, 6701 Rockledge Drive, MSC 7910, Phone (301) 435-0174, Fax: (301) 480-0525, e-mail: GrantsInfo@nih.gov.

R25E Cancer Education grant applications should **reasonably accommodate** the Form PHS 398 instructions provided either for research grants, the special instructions for NRSA Awards (pages V1-V8, pages NN, OO and PP) or some form of hybrid of these instructions, depending upon the nature of proposal, as follows:

1. Face Page: Use page AA of the Form 398 following all requirements for font size and character limitations. On line 2, check YES, write "PAR_____" after Number and "Cancer Education Grant (R25E)" after Title. Follow all general instructions as provided in the Form 398.
2. Description, Performance Sites, and Key Personnel: Use Page BB of the Form 398 and follow all instructions as provided.
3. In the remaining sections of the application, use a reasonable accommodation of the Form 398 instructions. Note that the NCI does require an **Evaluation Plan** (See section **VI. SPECIAL PROVISIONS AND REQUIREMENTS**)

Because of the wide spectrum of possible ways to use the R25 grant, all applicants are invited to contact NCI staff before preparing an application (see section **XI. INQUIRIES (R25E)**).

ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORTS/APPLICATION FOR CONTINUATION

Progress Reports should reasonably accommodate the Form PHS 2590, which is available at the following NIH website address: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/2590/2590.htm>. This form is also available at the other sources noted above for the Form PHS 398. This accommodation should also parallel the organization of your competing application to enable easy monitoring of progress by NCI staff. The National Institutes of Health should mail you the face page for this application together with return mail labels **four months** prior to the anniversary of the date of the grant. Look for this notification; if you do not receive it, call the NIH Data Management Branch at (301) 435-0896. You must submit the application **two months** prior to the anniversary date of the grant. If for some reason time becomes an issue, contact the National Cancer Institute (see XI. INQUIRIES).

VIII. REVIEW PROCEDURES AND CRITERIA:

A. Review Procedure:

Upon receipt, applications will be reviewed both by the Center for Scientific Review (CSR) and the National Cancer Institute (NCI) for completeness and for conformance to all eligibility requirements and special requirements (See section **III. ELIGIBILITY** and section **VI. SPECIAL PROVISIONS AND REQUIREMENTS** above). Incomplete applications will be returned to the applicant without further consideration.

B. Review Criteria:

In general, the following criteria will be used in evaluating R25 education grants:

1. **Novelty and/or significance** of the education program to cancer research and/or to the reduction of cancer incidence, mortality, and morbidity and to the improvement of quality of life.
2. Quality of the **program leader** (principal investigator) in terms of past track record of achievement and experience to provide direction, coordination and administration of the Education Program
3. Quality of the **key personnel and/or faculty** that will participate in the Program.
4. The overall quality and adequacy of the **design** of the Program to achieve its short-term and/or long-term objectives
5. Adequacy of the "**Evaluation Plan**" to assess the effectiveness of the Program in achieving its objectives.
6. Evidence of the **institution's commitment** and plans to continue the program after the period of grant support ends when the program involves curricula development aimed at strengthening the educational capability of the institution (e.g., a new curriculum for researchers or health care professionals in training) or when the program consists of educational activities directed toward the lay community and/or health care professionals in the community (e.g., outreach efforts of cancer centers).
7. The following review criteria apply specifically to any proposed education program that involves short-term experiences in a research environment:
 - quality of the proposed short-term education program including the commitment of the participating faculty, the program design, the availability of research support, and the educational environment.
 - access to candidates for short-term experiences and the ability to recruit high quality individuals from the applicant institution or other schools.
 - characteristics of the education program that might be expected to persuade short-term participants to consider cancer research careers.
 - success in attracting students back for repeated short-term appointments.
 - success in recruiting under-represented minorities.
 - plan to follow former participants and to assess the effect of such a program on their research careers.
8. When appropriate, adequacy of plans to diffuse or disseminate knowledge learned from the program to the biomedical research and/or health care community through appropriate publication in professional periodicals and journals, presentations at national meetings, etc...**(Combining the above factors, as appropriate, peer reviewers will determine an overall level of enthusiasm for the application which will be reflected in an NIH priority score.)**
9. Appropriateness of the budget and the duration of the support needed to achieve stated goals and objectives. A recommendation of less than 5 years should reflect the peer reviewers' judgement that the institution should accept responsibility for the program at an earlier time. Within the overall budget review, evaluate faculty salary requests for specialized tasks, e.g., administrative and coordinating activities necessary for complex multi-disciplinary or multi-institutional programs, or curriculum design and implementation activities. These types of faculty activities should be distinguished from traditional preceptor-student type activities that are not allowable costs. In other words, preceptor-student relations per se are to be considered part of one's regular academic/professional duties.

IX. AWARD CRITERIA:

Awards are made based on the availability of funds each fiscal year, the degree of merit as determined by peer reviewers, and the program priorities of the National Cancer Institute.

X. COMMON QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:

Because the R25E is so versatile and flexible, it is difficult to define commonly asked questions and answers that would be generally helpful to the average applicant. We recommend that you make inquiries as instructed in section **XI. INQUIRIES (R25E)** below.

XI. INQUIRIES (R25E):

We have tried to provide you with the most complete information possible about the **R25E**. If you need information and explanation concerning the **R25E**, please make your inquiries as follows:

A. Programmatic or scientific issues:

If you need more information and/or advice about the objectives and scope of this award, eligibility requirements, structure and organization of grant applications and peer review trends, please contact us by "clicking on" the INQUIRIES link directly below. You will be contacted promptly by one of the scientific professionals of the Cancer Training Branch of the NCI.

B. Fiscal Issues:

If you need information about the appropriate procedures for dealing with issues that involve changes in the sponsoring institution, the scope of the project as awarded, budget and period of support of the award or that involve any other issues requiring approval by the NCI or post award actions, please contact us by "clicking on" the INQUIRIES link directly below. You will be contacted promptly by one of the Grants Administration officials of the NCI.